

PAYING TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM
LAUB, SR.

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor William Laub, Sr. who passed away on October 14, 2007.

William Laub, Sr. was born on July 20, 1924, and went on to live a legacy of service at Southwest Gas and in his community. William's father Harold, along with three other partners began Southwest Gas during the Depression. In 1964, William succeeded his father as Southwest Gas' chief executive officer. He retired in 1988 after serving as CEO for 24 years, and as an employee for 40 years.

In William's time as CEO, Southwest Gas became a major tri-state utility and financial services operation. Southwest Gas began as a small company with no more than three thousand customers in southeastern California and now provides retail natural gas service to more than one million customers in California, Arizona, and Nevada. William's leadership and love of the company his father began was the formula for continued success at Southwest Gas.

William Laub, Sr. was not only passionate about Southwest Gas, but he also was passionate in his love of the community. In the 1960's he founded the Laub Foundation, and as a tribute to his father he established the Harold G. Laub Scholarship Program for children of Southwest Gas employees. He was also instrumental in getting the board of directors to approve a 10-year grant of \$250,000 to the College of Arts and Letters for the Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Additionally William served as the President of the Boulder Dam Area Council of Boy Scouts, Chairman of the Clark County Republican Central Committee, Republican National Committeeman, Chairman of the Nevada Equal Rights Commission, and a member of the Board of Trustees at KNPR Public Radio among other things. William was also a Director Emeritus from the Claremont School of Theology from 1977–2004, and a Trustee Emeritus of KNPR from 1996–2003.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor William Laub, Sr. Throughout his lifetime he was relentlessly committed to the advancement of Southwest Gas and the community. He was a wonderful asset to Nevada and I send out my deepest sympathies to his family and friends.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL LEAD
POISONING PREVENTION WEEK
AND CHILDHOOD LEAD POI-
SONING PREVENTION WEEK

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize this week, October 21–27, 2007, as National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week and as Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Week in the State of Maryland.

In recent decades, researchers have discovered the harmful effects for children who are

exposed to lead products. Lead poisoning in children impacts brain function, resulting in reduced intelligence, learning difficulties, behavioral problems, and other health consequences. Fortunately, lead poisoning from paint in homes is 100 percent preventable. The public needs better information about the dangers of lead exposure.

This bill will help parents hire a certified risk assessor to determine if there is lead paint in their homes. With this vital information, parents can determine how to keep their children safe from lead poisoning.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, over 300,000 American children ages 1–5 years have blood-lead levels greater than the level recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, CDC, 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood.

In 2006, over 1,200 Baltimore children under the age of 6 had blood-lead levels equal to or higher than the CDC recommended level. That number has dropped significantly in recent years, but more must be done.

The Federal Government aims to eliminate childhood lead poisoning in the United States as a major public health problem by the year 2010. In order to achieve this goal, several Federal agencies including the EPA, the CDC, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD, are working together through various grant programs to help individual citizens, non-profits, and the States in their clean-up efforts.

Non-profits around the country are actively working with Federal and State Governments to educate the public about the harmful effects of lead exposure. One such organization based in Baltimore, the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning, has been working tirelessly to reach out, educate, and advocate on behalf of children and their families impacted by lead exposure. Organizations such as the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning play an important role in efforts to eliminate childhood lead poisoning in the next 3 years.

In addition to the work done by non-profit organizations and federal and state agencies, I am proposing a Federal tax credit for homeowners that would help offset the costs of cleaning up lead paint in their homes. Today, I am introducing the Home Lead Safety Tax Credit Act of 2007, which would encourage homeowners and landlords to remove lead from homes in order to decrease the number of children who suffer from the effects of lead exposure.

I hope that, through these combined efforts, we will eliminate childhood lead poisoning by 2010.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SAFE
BUILDING CODES ACT OF 2007

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Safe Building Code Incentive Act of 2007 with my colleague from Florida, Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART.

The purpose for this legislation is to provide incentives for States to adopt higher building code standards, which will ultimately help preserve property, promote public safety and

make Americans and America's communities safer.

This bill's timeliness can be seen in a recent CBS News Poll that revealed 29 percent of Americans knew someone affected by Hurricane Katrina. As reported by CBS News, the comparable statistic from Hurricane Andrew in 1992 was barely half that—16 percent. This report provides a clear metric of the extent that today's Americans know and understand how disaster can hurt a community.

This report also highlights the clear public merit of the Safe Building Code Incentive Act of 2007 which I introduce today. Building codes strengthen and make safe the homes, businesses and places where our citizens work, play and live. They reflect the collective wisdom of design professionals, builders, and public safety officials who have sought to understand and apply the lessons of past tragedies.

Building codes use a tried and true format to document the reasonable steps that can be taken while new construction is underway to protect our neighbors and their communities from risks that, because they can be foreseen, can and should be minimized. These codes are truly the "ounce of prevention" that is worth far more than any after-the-fact pound of cure which must otherwise be borne by people and communities after they've suffered through a tragic loss of life, stability and treasured belongings and memories.

Where strong building codes are in place and enforced, natural disasters are less likely to be compounded by failures of preparation.

Today's model building codes govern all aspects of construction and help to protect homes and buildings from disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, flood, fire, ice storms and other natural catastrophes.

Strong building codes serve as the backbone of a community's preparedness against natural disasters.

As a Member of Congress my top priority has been public safety since taking office in 2005. My district, Sacramento, CA, is the most at risk river city in the country for catastrophic flooding. The city of Sacramento is located at the confluence of two major rivers, the American and Sacramento.

To a state like California, where we are experiencing significant population growth, and especially to a growing region such as Sacramento, the building standards we incorporate now will go a long way in providing a stable and safer future for our communities and property owners.

WHY WE NEED THE SAFE BUILDING CODE INCENTIVE ACT
OF 2007

In the aftermath of the 2004 and 2005 hurricanes, studies illustrate that the damages associated with high winds could have been avoided or minimized by statewide adoption of model building codes in the Gulf States.

What has become increasingly apparent in the wake of Katrina and other natural disasters that have struck our communities in recent years is that the Federal Government and the private sector are paying billions for disaster relief and rebuilding of communities.

Overwhelming evidence demonstrates the adoption and enforcement of strong statewide building codes greatly reduce disaster-related property damage and personal injuries while providing more efficient economic development and sustainable business operations after an event.

For example, in January 2006, a Louisiana State University, LSU, Hurricane Center study concluded that an estimated 65 percent reduction in Katrina wind related damage to homes in Louisiana could have been avoided if structures had been built to current model building code standards.

Despite these benefits, most states have not enacted mandatory statewide building codes and related inspection and enforcement measures for both commercial and residential structures.

Additionally, where Statewide codes exist, it is not uncommon to allow individual jurisdictions, such as cities of a particular class, or counties, to deviate from the State standards, occasionally resulting in a weakening of the model minimum standards or to opt out of the standards altogether, leaving areas within a State more vulnerable than others.

As a result, State standards for construction, code-related inspection and enforcement vary widely across the country.

I am not typically a proponent of a one-size-fits all approach to public policy, but when it comes to public safety I believe it is important to set the standards high and for our communities to meet these standards.

WHAT THE SAFE BUILDING CODE INCENTIVE ACT OF 2007 WOULD DO

Under the current authorities in the Stafford Act, mitigation funds are generally available through two programs—the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program. My legislation creates incentives within each of these programs for States to adopt and enforce the highest safety standards before disaster strikes.

After a disaster strikes a community or State and the Federal Government provides disaster relief funding, States with an approved Mitigation Plan are eligible to receive Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding equal to 15 percent of the total Federal disaster relief spending for that event.

Additionally, a State may elect to prepare a more comprehensive Enhanced Mitigation Plan which would qualify the State for additional mitigation funding up to 20 percent of the amount awarded for grants.

Regardless of what the State mitigation plan is, under the Safe Building Code Incentive Act of 2007 a State would be eligible for an additional 4 percent of Federal disaster relief spending if it has adopted a mandatory Statewide building code and has effective enforcement measures in place.

However, if a State decides not to adopt a mandatory Statewide building code, it will not be penalized and would still be eligible to obtain a minimum 15 percent of the post-disaster mitigation funding under the HMGP.

My legislation merely serves as an incentive for States to seek additional funding of 4 percent by adopting a mandatory Statewide building code and implementing effective enforcement measures.

In addition, the Safe Building Code Incentive Act of 2007 will allow, as well as encourage, State, local and tribal governments to use PDM funds to establish building code enforcement programs prior to the occurrence of a disaster, which helps States to begin standardizing construction in previously unregulated areas.

In my view, this funding is well placed. A little prevention will go a long way and in the case of disaster relief funding it can save the taxpayers billions in recovery funds.

The benefit of stronger more up-to-date building codes is twofold.

The first benefit is by encouraging and providing stronger building codes, our buildings are more likely to withstand higher impacts and therefore remain intact if a storm hits a community.

The second benefit is that if a catastrophe does devastate a community, by enacting these stricter standards recovering communities would be eligible for more Federal funds under my proposed legislation.

The best case scenario is that a community will never be in a position to need these extra funds. But by enacting stronger building codes and encouraging more community plans we are taking a positive and proactive step in that direction.

In closing, as we reflect on the tragedy of Katrina and continue to rebuild the Gulf Coast region, we should also be viewing this as a time and an opportunity to rebuild a public policy that will serve the American taxpayer more efficiently as well as protect our communities more effectively.

I ask my colleagues to support the Safe Building Code Incentive Act of 2007.

TRIBUTE TO TG MISSOURI CORPORATION

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mrs. EMERSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate TG Missouri Corporation in Perryville, Missouri on its 20th anniversary. This is a true milestone for a company which will continue to have a positive impact for many years to come.

Business operations such as TG Missouri's represent the cornerstone of Southern Missouri's rural economy. In 20 short years, TG Missouri has created significant opportunities by remaining committed to the best interests of the community, its customers and its employees. Perhaps most important, TG Missouri has provided job opportunities to roughly 1200 highly skilled and very dedicated workers, beginning as a company of just 35 people in 1987.

TG Missouri understands that its strengths come from its workforce. They have achieved success by relying on the unique skills of each individual who is associated with the company. I know that their success has been closely observed by others, and TG Missouri will serve as an example of responsible and quality business practices for years to come.

Madam Speaker, it is a great privilege to honor TG Missouri on 20 years of success. I am proud to express my congratulations today in the U.S. House of Representatives on TG Missouri's momentous anniversary and to wish them many more years of success.

TRIBUTE TO THE NEW ULRECHT REFORMED CHURCH

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. FOSSELLA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the New Utrecht Reformed

Church in Brooklyn, New York on its 330th Anniversary.

Dutch settlers formed the town of New Utrecht, one of the original five towns of Brooklyn, in the mid 1600's and eventually, under the authority of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands, established the New Utrecht Cemetery in 1654. These same settlers gathered as a congregation in 1677 under the name of the Reformed Dutch Church of New Utrecht Long Island, which is the fourth oldest congregation in Brooklyn. It was later renamed the New Utrecht Reformed Church, the name it carries to this day.

The history of the church is detailed and storied, including being seized and occupied by the British during the Revolutionary War and used as a hospital. There is even a weathervane that bears the bullet holes sustained during the Battle of Long Island.

The Church also provided care and assistance to the Continental Army and General Woodhull, who eventually died inside the hospital. The Daughters of the American Revolution have since raised a statue of General Woodhull on the grounds of the Church cemetery.

In 1783, when the British evacuated Brooklyn, the New Utrecht Reform Church was privileged to be the first location to have the Betsy Ross flag flown over its grounds. To this day, the same liberty pole flies an American flag nearly 224 years after the British evacuation.

Not only did the New Utrecht Reform Church play a vital role in the Revolutionary War but also played an important role in the Civil War by sponsoring Company H of the 14th New York Regiment of the Union Army. To this day, the lives of these brave Union soldiers are memorialized in the church's sponsorship of the New York State Military Company H Brooklyn 14th Regiment re-enactment troop.

In 1910, the New Utrecht Reformed Church founded the oldest continuous Boy Scout Troop in the nation; Troop 20 and its counterpart, Cub Scout Pack 20. The congregation continues its commitment to provide safe harbor for our community's youth through support of the scouting program and many other community events centered on the enrichment of children's lives.

Throughout its long history, New Utrecht has opened its doors to new immigrants arriving on our shore: the Italian congregation in 1947; the Chinese congregation in the 1980's; the Korean congregation in the early 1980's and the Russian congregation in the 1990s.

Madam Speaker, New Utrecht Reformed Church has been a mainstay in the Brooklyn community for 330 years and has impacted the lives of countless individuals. On this 330th anniversary, I would like to honor the church for its contributions to the people of Brooklyn and to the United States with the hope of another 330 years to come.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "BROADBAND CENSUS OF AMERICA ACT OF 2007"

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 22, 2007

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the "Broadband Census of America